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NOTES AND COMMENT ON THE EXHIBITIONS

THE 1914 EXHIBITION OF AMERICAN PAINTINGS BY C. P. DAVIS, CURATOR

The Ninth Annual Exhibition of Selected Paintings by American Artists, in the City Art Museum, is a most interesting collection of modern American painting.

It is larger than former ones and shows in most instances the painter in work typical of



ELLIOTT W. DAINGERFIELD
AN ARCADIAN HUNTRESS



GARDNER SYMONS
THROUGH SNOW-CLAD HILLS AND VALLEYS

Two of the Paintings selected from this Exhibition.

ACQUISITIONS OF 1914

his style and point of view, apparently uninfluenced by a thought of critic or purchaser.

The quality most striking is skill; whatever mood there is, in most instances is cheerfulness; the key generally very high, the method direct. It is doubtful if one could find over a dozen paintings showing any particular mystery in their construction; art does not conceal art. These are selected paintings, but they are by painters whose work is most frequently to be met in exhibitions of today, and judging by them American art is energetic, cheerful, enthusiastic and resourceful, indicating that our national art is at least strong and vigorous. The painter is out in the sunlight among the other workers and players, taking notes like any other reporter and "getting there" with promptness and dispatch.

He seems to take an immense interest in what he is doing and he means that whoever sees his work shall be interested also. And no doubt the most of those who see these things are interested.

Those who like color, certainly: those who are interested in methods, problems and the painter's struggle for light, must be interested, if only for a time. Whether the work has very lasting qualities or much refinement may be doubtful. The painter has been more busy learning how to say than what to say, and his audience will be comparatively small until his mental qualifications have caught up with his technical ones. This is not so true of the landscapes and marines in the exhibitions: one needs no technical knowledge of painting to enjoy many of the fine compositions that are not less skilfully painted than their neighbors on the walls. The old-fashioned visitor may regret that it has taken so much skill to express so little worth while. The proportion of visitors to an art gallery who are truly capable of judging and appreciating the technical qualities of a painting or other work of art, is a comparatively small one, and the proportion of those who thoroughly understand the method employed is still smaller, confined to those who have made a technical study of such work. The painter who paints for the sake of technique paints for the commendation of his fellow-workers and those who have studied or are especially interested. It is a pity that anyone should be denied the enjoyment of an art because of the lack of an expert's knowledge of the means of expression; a pity that he should fail to take advantage of what an art collection offers him because he "can't understand these things." It may console him to know that many who have passed their lives in the study of "these things" do not always understand them, and that perhaps he is to be congratulated upon the fact that he doesn't have to.